Amendments to the Claims

Please cancel claims 1-34 without prejudice, and add new claims 35-68, as follows:

Claims 1-34 (cancelled).

Claim 35 (new). Apparatus for providing optical radiation, comprising a pump source for providing pump radiation, and a brightness converter, and wherein the brightness converter is defined by a length, and contains a substantially rigid region along at least a portion of the length.

Claim 36 (new). Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the brightness converter comprises a core, a first cladding, and rare earth dopant, and is defined by a first end and a second end.

Claim 37 (new). Apparatus according to claim 36 wherein the brightness converter comprises a tapered region located between the first end and the second end, the apparatus further being defined by a cross-sectional area of the first end and a cross-sectional area of the second end, and further wherein the cross-sectional area of the first end is greater than the cross-sectional area of the second end, and the brightness converter is substantially rigid between the first end and the tapered region.

Claim 38 (new). Apparatus according to claim 35, and wherein the pump radiation is coupled from the pump source into the brightness converter using a coupling means.

1	Claim 39 (new). Apparatus according to claim 38 wherein the coupling means is
2	a lens.
3	
4	Claim 40 (new). Apparatus according to claim 36 wherein the apparatus
5	comprises a first reflector for reflecting optical radiation emerging from the first end.
6	
7	Claim 41 (new). Apparatus according to claim 40 and including a second
8	reflector.
9	
10	Claim 42 (new). Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the pump source
11	comprises at least one laser diode, at least one laser diode bar, at least one laser
12	diode stack, or at least one laser diode mini-bar stack.
13	
14	Claim 43 (new). Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the pump source
15	includes a solid-state laser, a gas laser, an arc lamp, or a flash lamp.
16	
17	Claim 44 (new). Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the apparatus
18	comprises a plurality of the pump sources and a combining means for combining
19	pump radiation emitted by the pump sources.
20	
21	Claim 45 (new). Apparatus according to claim 44 wherein the combining means
22	comprises a beam splitter, a reflector, a polarisation beam combiner, a beam shaper,
23	a wavelength division multiplexer, or a plurality of optical fibres in optical contact
24	along at least a portion of their length.
25	

Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the brightness

Claim 46 (new).

converter contains a plurality of cores.

1	Claim 47 (new).	Apparatus	according	to	claim	35	wherein	the	brightness
2	converter contains	a single core	.						
. 3	~								
4	Claim 48 (new).	Apparatus	according	to	claim	35	wherein	the	brightness
5	converter is circula	ar. ·							
6									
7	Claim 49 (new).	Apparatus	according	to	claim	35	wherein	the	brightness
8	converter is non-ci	ircular.							
9									
. 10	Claim 50 (new).	Apparatus	according	to	claim	35	wherein	the	brightness
11	converter comprise	es a rare-eart	h dopant.						
12									
13	Claim 51 (new).	Apparatus	according to	o cla	aim 50	whe	rein the ra	are e	arth dopant
14	is selected from	n the grou	up compris	sing	Ytter	bium	ı, Erbiun	n, N	leodymium,
14 15	is selected from	_	Ť	_					•
		hulium, Sam	arium, Holn	nium	n, Dysp				•
15	Praseodymium, T	hulium, Sam	arium, Holn	nium	n, Dysp				•
15 16	Praseodymium, T	hulium, Sam	arium, Holn ped with Ytt	nium erbi	n, Dysp um.	orosiu	úm, Erbiu	m co	•
15 16 17	Praseodymium, T	hulium, Sam dymium codo Apparatus	arium, Holn ped with Ytt according	nium erbi	n, Dysp um.	orosiu	úm, Erbiu	m co	doped with
15 16 17 18	Praseodymium, T Ytterbium, or Neod Claim 52 (new).	hulium, Sam dymium codo Apparatus	arium, Holn ped with Ytt according	nium erbi	n, Dysp um.	orosiu	úm, Erbiu	m co	doped with
15 16 17 18 19	Praseodymium, T Ytterbium, or Neod Claim 52 (new).	hulium, Sam dymium codo Apparatus es a second c	arium, Holn ped with Ytt according cladding.	nium erbii to	n, Dysp um. claim	orosio	im, Erbiu wherein	m co	doped with
15 16 17 18 19 20	Praseodymium, T Ytterbium, or Neod Claim 52 (new). converter comprise	hulium, Sam dymium codo Apparatus es a second o	arium, Holn ped with Ytt according cladding.	nium erbii to	n, Dysp um. claim claim	36 35	im, Erbiu wherein wherein	m co	doped with brightness
15 16 17 18 19 20 21	Praseodymium, T Ytterbium, or Neod Claim 52 (new). converter comprise Claim 53 (new).	hulium, Samdymium codo Apparatus es a second of Apparatus d with neodyn	arium, Holn ped with Ytt according cladding. according	nium erbio to to erbio	n, Dysp um. claim claim um, and	36 35	im, Erbiu wherein wherein	m co	doped with brightness
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22	Praseodymium, T Ytterbium, or Neod Claim 52 (new). converter comprise Claim 53 (new). converter is doped	hulium, Samdymium codo Apparatus es a second of Apparatus d with neodyn	arium, Holn ped with Ytt according cladding. according	nium erbio to to erbio	n, Dysp um. claim claim um, and	36 35	im, Erbiu wherein wherein	m co	doped with brightness
15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23	Praseodymium, T Ytterbium, or Neod Claim 52 (new). converter comprise Claim 53 (new). converter is doped	hulium, Samdymium codo Apparatus es a second of Apparatus d with neodyn	arium, Holn ped with Ytt according cladding. according mium or ytte	nium erbin to to erbin ytte	n, Dysp um. claim claim um, and	36 35 d the	um, Erbiu wherein wherein	m co the the	doped with brightness brightness doped with

1	Claim 55 (new). Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the brightness					
2	converter is defined by a width, and wherein the width is in the range 0.1mm to					
3	100mm.					
4						
5	Claim 56 (new). Apparatus according to claim 55 wherein the width is in the					
6	range 0.2mm to 25mm.					
7						
8	Claim 57 (new). Apparatus according to claim 56 wherein the width is in the					
9	range 5mm to 15mm.					
10						
11	Claim 58 (new). Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the brightness					
12	converter is defined by a breadth, and wherein the breadth is in the range 0.1mm to					
13	100mm.					
14						
15	Claim 59 (new). Apparatus according to claim 58 wherein the breadth is in the					
16	range 0.2mm to 25mm.					
17						
18	Claim 60 (new). Apparatus according to claim 59 wherein the breadth is in the					
19	range 2mm to 15mm.					
20						
21	Claim 61 (new). Apparatus according to claim 1 wherein the brightness converter					
22	is defined by a length, and wherein the length is in the range 1mm to 2000mm.					
23						
24	Claim 62 (new). Apparatus according to claim 61 wherein the length is in the					
25	range 10mm to 200mm.					

1	Claim 63 (new).	Apparatus according to claim 62 wherein the length is in the					
2	range 10mm to 50mm.						
3							
4	Claim 64 (new).	Apparatus according to claim 35 wherein the brightness					
5	converter is formed	from an optical fibre preform.					
6							
7	Claim 65 (new).	Apparatus according to claim 64 wherein the preform is made					
8	from silica, silicic, p	hosphate or phosphatic glass.					
9							
10	Claim 66 (new).	Apparatus according to claim 64 wherein the preform defines					
11	longitudinally extend	ded holes disposed therein.					
12							
13	Claim 67 (new).	Apparatus according to claim 66 wherein the preform includes					
14	stress róds.						
15							
16	Claim 68 (new).	Apparatus according to claim 35 and in the form of a laser, a Q-					
17	switched fibre lase	r, a master oscillator power amplifier, or a laser that contains a					
18	frequency converte	r.					
19							
20		(End of amendments.)					
21		•					
22							
23							
24							
25							
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